



S.V.A.C.

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: 2 APR 2013

Location: NG Aviation Facility, Concord

In Attendance:

<p><u>Members:</u> Peter Burdett, Chairman, MOAA Steph Riley, Secretary, NGANH Rep. Robert Theberge Francis "Sharkey" Madden, AMLEGION Benjamin Saxon, DAV Ron Reilly, DAV Greg Lynch, VFW Kenith Chase, MOPH Al Grant, VVA Raymond Goulet, Jr VVA David Kenney, ROA Joe DiChiaro, MOAA Kevin Grady, AFA Ed Josephson, AFA Joe Shea, MCL Ray Hayes, AFSA Frank Musmanno, NH Army Retiree Council Susan Cuddy, WVA Mike Farinola, CVMA Raymond Schwendeman, CVMA <u>Advisors:</u> (non-voting) Peggy LaBrecque, NH Veterans Home Mike Horne, NH Veterans Cemetery Jo Moncher, DHHS Brig Gen Carolyn Protzmann, Deputy Adj. Gen Maj Gen William Reddel, TAG</p>	<p><u>Guests:</u> Sarah Holmes for Senator Shaheen Steve Monier for Senator Ayotte Joshua Denton for Rep Shea-Porter Michael Ollen for Rep McLane-Kuster Amy Kennedy, Policy Advisor for Gov Hassan David McCloskey, State Rep/ American Legion Lisa Aldridge, NH Transition Assistance Advisor Michael Rice, NH ESGR Col Paul Loiselle, NHNG Chief of the Joint Staff Ken Lull, NH ESGR Dan Marcek, VetFlix Robert Garand, Catholic War Veterans Russell Bilodeau, Catholic War Veterans Cate Sementa, Harbor Homes SSVF Andy Lacasse, Public Affairs Director WRJ VA Mary Behnke, Women Vets PM at Manchester VA Madeline Demeule, DFC FOR NH John Willbarger, Hero to Hire John Fuhrman, Autofair LtCol Todd Swass, NGANH Leslie Pasternack, ACT ONE H. Allen Chadwick, MOAA Anthony Casella, NHNGEA William Bates, NHNGEA Gen Harry Miller, Easter Seals</p>
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1. Open Meeting/ Call to order: Chairman, Pete Burdett convened the meeting at 5:00 p.m.

a. Pledge of Allegiance: P Burdett **Invocation:** J DiChiaro

b. Welcome/Remarks: Thanked everyone for taking time to be here. Vice Chair not here, he is dealing with the loss of a family member. Griff, our past chairman, has not been doing well, having medical issues. The TAG, MajGen Reddel, would like to talk about the Welcome Home ceremony for the Vietnam Vets this past Saturday.

[Reddel]-Thanks to everyone that came out for the ceremony. The question came out "Where do we go from here?" I would like to take this ceremony on the road and do it at a different place in the state each year. Would like to take

it to the veterans, instead of the veterans needing to come to us. I sent out an Op Ed to the media outlets that stressed the importance of taking care of our veterans. It was estimated that we had about 2000 attendees. I sent out the program from the ceremony to those who didn't get a hard copy at the event. Also sent out a list of websites that are great resources, just have to click on the links.

c. Introduction of New Members/Guests/Visitors:

Mary Behnke, Women Vets PM at Manchester VA
Madeline Demeule, DFC FOR NH
John Willbarger, Hero to Hire
John Fuhrman, Autofair
Lt Col Todd Swass, NGANH
Leslie Pasternack, ACT ONE
H. Allen Chadwick, MOAA
CMSgt Anthony Casella, NHNGEA
MSgt William Bates, NHNGEA
Gen Harry Miller, ED for Veteran Services at Easter Seals

d. Secretary's Report: S Riley reported the presence of a quorum, making it an official meeting. The minutes from the MAR 2013 meeting were approved with a motion by F Madden, and a 2nd by B Saxon, unanimous vote to accept minutes.

e. Speakers:

John Fuhrman, Vet training program-Was requested to speak by Steve Monier. John is retired USN, is the corporate trainer for the Autofair Dealership Group. There are 7 dealerships in the Autofair group: 2 in Mass-Tewksbury and Plymouth and 5 in NH: Stratham, Nashua and 3 in Manchester. Are always looking for sales people, also have other job opportunities as service writers and technicians. Are looking to train new people to staff the NH locations. Think that veterans are very process driven and would be ideal candidates for the positions. Need 20-25 people for the sales positions, are also looking for folks with motor pool or equipment experience. Can contact John for job fairs.

Comcast update- (Pete Burdett) Comcast had put up a challenge to hire 1000 veterans by 2015. They have already hired 1000 so now they are looking to hire another 1000. They have opportunities in the electronics area. Their POC is: William Baas at William_Bass@comcast.com and his phone number is 603-695-1414. He has recently been appointed to the Veterans Count BOD, which is where Pete made the contact with him.

Leslie Pasternack, Make Sure It's Me (MSIM) initiative- is the director of ACT ONE, daughter of a Vietnam Vet. Wanted to bridge the military-civilian gap with regards to TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury). Heard about the play "Make Sure It's Me" and felt it was a great script to facilitate discussion in the community about the issue. Have a MSIM info card about the play. Play was written by Kate Wenner, who used to do documentary films for 20/20, after many interviews with vets. She didn't want to use the material for a documentary, she wrote a script with it instead. ACT ONE got permission from Kate to do the play in June. Decided to get the word out early about it by doing 5 library presentations in the state featuring script readings from the play. Steph Riley participated in two of the presentations. Leslie, Steph and Conan Marchi (one of the actors) were interviewed by Sam Adams for WOKQ about the library presentations. Have developed a TBI fact sheet and resource card that is available to organizations to hand out. 4000 of them have been printed through donations from the Red Cross. The Brain Injury Association of NH is donating the cost of printing 4000 more. Reservations for the June performances are highly encouraged since the theater only holds 60 people.

[Moncher]- The Red Cross recently recognized Chief Worrel for their hero awards, Leslie had nominated him. The Manchester VA gave their direct line for their poly-trauma center on the brochure. The WRJ VA is doing the same for the next batch of brochures. Kudos to the Vas for giving permission to publish the direct lines.

Madeline Demeule, Vet to Vet Program- people who begin recovery from substance abuse and addiction often have other difficulties such as unemployment, unstable housing, marital problems, childcare issues, etc. A recovery coach can help connect with resources, support all paths to recovery, help stop addictive behaviors, provide encouragement and reminders of accomplishments. Need to train people as recovery coaches and then can hook them up with veterans that need coaching. It is life coaching, not counseling, and is a paid position (\$20 per hour) and you will get free training to become a coach. Are in desperate need of recovery coaches, want folks that know something about addiction either from experiencing it personally or through a loved one or a friend. Want them also to know something about recovery or are actually in recovery. Have training coming up in May for anyone who is interested.

2. Old Business:

a. Legislative Committee- Ed Josephson: has sent out the LSR spreadsheet to everyone. The crossover of bills has occurred. The bills from the House have gone to the Senate and vice versa. Haven't seen much action yet, the scheduling needs to be done.

HB 624- waiving the residency requirement for in-state tuition rates for veterans attending the university system of New Hampshire. Hearing was held today, it was brief, Rep Baldasaro presented it. No other speakers came forward. There was a question for the UNH system. Rep Theberge had asked for an amendment to be put in regarding a time limit after discharge of 10 years. The bill OTP (Ought to Pass) pending the answers that UNH gives to the committee.

SB 47- relative to the surviving spouse retaining the right to use the Purple Heart license plate until he or she dies or remarries. There is no date yet on when this will be heard, there may be a delay in scheduling.

HB 399- NH Liberty Act. SVAC was only following it. House passed it with a vote of 337 to 15 and now will be going to the Senate. Ed doesn't think this should pass. Should we do more than just follow this, perhaps take a position on it? After a lengthy discussion a motion was made by J DiChiaro to oppose this bill, was seconded by D Kenney and the motion was passed unanimously.

3. New Business:

a. National Legislative Staff Remarks:

Sarah Holmes (Senator Shaheen):

DELEGATION MAKES CASE FOR PEASE TO AIR NATIONAL GUARD

In a letter to the recently appointed Director of the Air National Guard, U.S. Senators Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) and Kelly Ayotte (R-NH) along with Representatives Carol Shea-Porter (NH-1) and Annie Kuster (NH-2) expressed continued support for Pease Air National Guard Base and the 157th Air Refueling Wing to receive the KC-46A tanker.

SHAHEEN, BIPARTISAN GROUP OF SENATORS PROTECT RANK OF PURPLE HEART, BRONZE STAR U.S. Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-N.H.) and a bipartisan group of twenty-one Senators are calling on Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel to preserve the precedence of combat decorations over a new medal honoring drone pilots and cyber warriors. The Senators issued this call in a letter to Secretary Hagel when they specifically asked him to reconsider the Defense Department's recent decision to give the newly created Distinguished Warfare Medal precedence above such combat awards as the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart.

SHAHEEN RENEWS COMMITMENT TO ADDRESSING SEXUAL ASSAULT IN THE MILITARY, PROTECTING VICTIMS Senator Jeanne Shaheen renewed her commitment to addressing sexual assault in the military at a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing this morning which was called to further examine the epidemic. The hearing featured extensive testimony from sexual assault victims and at the hearing, Shaheen questioned the witnesses on their personal experiences in the military. Shaheen also asked the witnesses to offer their input on ways to implement reforms that will make sure survivors can report crimes and prosecute offenders.

BIPARTISAN COALITION OF SENATORS RENEW CALL FOR ARMY TO FULLY REVIEW CONTRACTOR CASES WITH LINKS TO TERRORIST GROUPS A bipartisan group of senators led by U.S. Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) are expressing continued concern and frustration over the Army's use of contractors that have potential ties to terrorist groups. The senators specifically referred to a longstanding backlog of 43 referrals pending before the Army's Suspension and Debarment Official that involve individuals or companies with links to groups including the Haqqani Network and Al Qaeda as reason for concern that underscores the Army's need to take swift action.

Senator Shaheen met with a group of Veterans at Dartmouth and discussed with them many of the recent changes in the military and their perspectives on how effective they will be, and their implementation. She will use this feedback as she continues her work as Chair of the Readiness Subcommittee on the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Steve Monier (Senator Ayotte):

March 5, 2013

- Senator Ayotte questioned Central Command (CENTCOM) Commander General Mattis, and Special Operations Command (SOCOM) Commander Admiral McRaven during a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing. During an exchange with General Mattis, Senator Ayotte asked if Senator Ayotte's No Contracting with the Enemy legislation from last year would be helpful if expanded beyond CENTCOM. General Mattis replied that it would be helpful if expanded.
- Senator Ayotte met with NH members of Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) to discuss care for disabled veterans and PVA's legislative priorities.
- Senator Ayotte met with Major General William Reddel, the Adjutant General of New Hampshire, to discuss NH National Guard priorities.

March 6, 2013

Senator Ayotte and the NH delegation sent a letter to Lieutenant General Stanley E. Clark III, Director of the Air National Guard, expressing continued support for Pease Air National Guard Base and the 157th Air Refueling Wing to receive the KC-46A tanker. In January, the Air Force announced that Pease was one of five Air National Guard finalists to receive the KC-46A, which will replace the Eisenhower-era KC-135 tankers. Air Force officials visited Pease in February to begin assessing its competitiveness to receive the new tanker. In the spring of 2013, the Air Force will select preferred and reasonable alternative locations and begin an Environmental Impact Analysis Process. The selected Air National Guard base will receive aircraft beginning in FY 2018.

March 7, 2013

Senator Ayotte questioned General Carter F. Ham, Commander, U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) and General Fraser during a hearing to review their respective organizations' requests for the FY 2014 NDAA and the Future Years Defense Program.

March 8, 2013

Senator Ayotte joined several other senators in a letter to Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel asking him to reconsider Distinguished Warfare Medal's (DWM) placement in the order of precedence above the Purple Heart and Bronze Star. The letter expressed opposition to the Department's decision to rank the Distinguished Warfare Medal (DWM)—which is designed to recognize service members such as drone pilots and cyber warriors for achievements that do not involve direct combat—above combat decorations such as the Bronze Star Medal and the Purple Heart. Secretary Hagel said he has ordered the military service chiefs to review the new medal and its precedence. Senator Ayotte also is a cosponsor of bipartisan legislation (S. 470) to ensure that the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star occupy a position of precedence above the new DWM.

March 11, 2013

Senator Ayotte met with General Bob Kehler (pronounced KAY-ler), current Commander, U.S. Strategic Command (STRATCOM) to discuss our nation's nuclear deterrent and missile defenses.

March 12, 2013

- Senator Ayotte questioned General Kehler and General Keith Alexander, Commander, U.S. Cyber Command (CYBERCOM), during a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing.
- Senator Ayotte met with Admiral Samuel J. Locklear, U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) Commander to discuss issues in PACOM's area of responsibility.
- Senator Ayotte met with General Charles H. Jacoby, Jr. Commander of the North American Aerospace Defense (NORAD) Command and NORTHCOM to discuss missile defense.
- Senator Ayotte spoke on the Senate floor regarding the Administration's decision to bring Sulaiman Abu Ghaith, Osama bin Laden's son-in-law and suspected member of al Qaeda, to the United States for trial in civilian court.

March 13, 2013

Senator Ayotte praised the courage of victims who appeared before the Senate Armed Services Personnel Subcommittee for a hearing on sexual assault in the military. She thanked them for their service and said their testimony will be invaluable as the panel and the Department of Defense work to prevent such crimes. During the hearing Senator Ayotte made the following statement: "Sexual assault and rape are not about the weakness of the victim, they're about power and control. In a military context that becomes an even greater problem," said Senator Ayotte. "We've got to address this. It's undermining our readiness, our military, and it's totally unacceptable and it's not consistent with the greatest military on Earth."

March 15, 2013

- Senator Ayotte sent a letter to Undersecretary of Defense (Comptroller) expressing her expectation that DoD fully complies with Ayotte sponsored legislation that prohibits funding for the Medium Extended Air Defense System (MEADS) – a troubled weapons program that the Army has said it will never use.
- Senator Ayotte led a letter also signed by Senators Mary Landrieu (D-LA), Saxby Chambliss (R- GA), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), and Shaheen in a letter to Acting Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness expressing support for the National Guard Youth Challenge Program.

March 19, 2013

- Senator Ayotte joined the Maine and NH Senate delegations in a statement responding to reports that indicate DOD plans to issue furlough notices to civilian employees, including those at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. "These furloughs are a product of an entirely avoidable situation and it's disappointing that Congress and the President failed to replace the automatic cuts known as 'sequestration' with a comprehensive plan to stabilize our debt and deficits. We need a bipartisan and long-term deficit reduction solution that will avoid the impacts of these cuts, which are already threatening jobs and families in New Hampshire and Maine, and we remain committed to working together to finding that solution."
- Senator Ayotte met with General Frank Grass, Chief of the National Guard Bureau (NGB) to discuss the negative effects of sequestration on the National Guard.

March 20, 2013

Approved

- The Senate passed the FY 2013 Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act (H.R. 933) in a 73 to 26 vote. Senator Ayotte voted against passage of the bill. Some Senate appropriators blocked a Senator Ayotte amendment to strike funding for MEADS.
- Senator Ayotte joined Senators John McCain (R-AZ) and Lindsey Graham (R-SC) in a statement regarding the Administration's decision to bring alleged al Qaeda operative Ibrahim Suleiman Adnan Adam Harun to the United States for trial in civilian. "Harun is a foreign member of al Qaeda who has allegedly attempted to kill U.S. military personnel in Afghanistan and participated in planning or carrying out an attack against Americans in Nigeria. As such, he should be treated as a foreign enemy belligerent at war with our country – not a common criminal. "Based on Section 1022 of the Fiscal Year 2012 National Defense Authorization Act, there is no doubt he should be placed in military custody at Guantanamo. "It is important to remember that law of war detention, under which our intelligence community can easily return to question detainees months or even years later, helped connect the dots that ultimately led to Osama bin Laden. "When we place individuals like Harun and Sulaiman abu Ghayth in our civilian legal system, read them their Miranda Rights, and focus on prosecution rather than intelligence collection, we miss valuable information that will prevent future attacks."
- Senator Ayotte joined Senator Mark Begich (D-AK) and Jeff Session (R-AL) to introduce Senate Resolution 82, a resolution commemorating the 30th anniversary of the proposal for the Strategic Defense Initiative.
- Senator Ayotte cosponsored Senator Jim Inhofe's (R-OK) Senate Amendment 72 to the Senate Continuing Resolution 8 (The Budget Resolution), which requires DoD to ensure the continuation of tuition assistance programs for members of the armed forces for the remainder of FY 2013

March 21, 2013

Senator Ayotte led a letter also signed by 10 other senators to Attorney General Eric Holder expressing opposition to the Administration's decision to bring Sulaiman Abu Ghaith, Osama bin Laden's son-in-law and suspected member of al Qaeda, to the United States for trial in civilian court.

March 23, 2013

The Senate passed its FY 2014 Budget Resolution (S. Con. Res) 8 in a 50 to 49 vote. The resolution revises the appropriate budgetary levels for FY 2013, and sets forth the appropriate budgetary levels for FY 2015 through FY 2023. Senator Ayotte voted against the resolution.

As the Senate considered S. Con. Res. 8, Senator Ayotte introduced several amendments related to national security:

Cutting Funding for the "Missile to Nowhere" (Passed): Continuing her efforts to cut wasteful defense spending, Senator Ayotte's bipartisan amendment prohibits the allocation of funds for MEADS. Ayotte's efforts to strike funding for MEADS have been endorsed by several government watchdog groups, including the Council for Citizens Against Government Waste, the Taxpayers Protection Alliance, the Cost of Government Center, and Concerned Veterans for America. Senators Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Mark Begich (D-AK), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), and Mark Udall (D-CO) cosponsored Ayotte's amendment. The amendment was approved by a vote of 94 to 5.

Pentagon Audit (Passed): This bipartisan amendment, cosponsored by Senators Claire McCaskill (D-MO), Joe Manchin (D-WV), Jerry Moran (R-KS), and Tom Coburn (R-OK), passed during consideration of the budget resolution. The amendment will help ensure a full and repeatable audit of the Pentagon by 2017. Since arriving in the Senate, Ayotte has led the push for an expedited and full audit of the Pentagon to ensure that it is a responsible steward of taxpayer dollars. Senator Ayotte successfully included a requirement in the FY 2013 NDAA bill that requires the Pentagon to achieve an important audit milestone by 2014.

Never Contract with the Enemy (Introduced): This amendment, cosponsored by Senators Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Pat Roberts (R-KS), Jim Inhofe (R-OK), and Joe Manchin (D-WV), would have helped to expand and enhance the No Contracting with the Enemy law (authored by Senator Ayotte and former Senator Scott Brown (R-MA)) to ensure that American taxpayer dollars do not end up in the hands of our enemies. The Ayotte-Brown legislation, enacted in 2011, makes it easier for U.S. contracting officials to void contracts with contractors who funnel taxpayer resources to enemies of the United States, such as the Taliban. Senators Ayotte and Blumenthal will soon introduce a standalone bill.

March 26, 2013

Senator Ayotte joined the Pease Greeters to greet an incoming flight

March 27, 2013

Senator Ayotte held a veterans roundtable luncheon.

March 28, 2013

Senator Ayotte met with leadership of Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. Senator Ayotte received a briefing from PNSY commander Rear Admiral (Sel) Fuller on the current activities of the shipyard, the status of infrastructure projects, and the impacts of sequestration.

Josh Denton (Congresswoman Shea-Porter):

In March the Congresswoman:

- . Toured the PNSY;
- . Toured the NH Air Force National Guard Base; and
- . Spoke at the Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Event.

The Congresswoman recently cosponsored:

H.R. 679 The Honor America's Guard-Reserve Retirees Act H.R. 357 The GI Bill Tuition Fairness Act of 2013 H.R. 833 To amend title 10, United States Code, to require that the Purple Heart occupy a position of precedence above the new Distinguished Warfare Medal.

H.R. 543 The Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2013

The Congresswoman wrote a letter to the Department of Defense in support of Tuition Assistance for Active Duty.

Michael Ollen (Congresswoman McLane-Kuster):

Congresswoman Kuster is very supportive of the KC-46A, working with folks to get a tour of Pease before the announcement comes out. Last week she co-sponsored the Military Surviving Spouses Equity Act. She co-sponsored the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2013. She co-sponsored the Support Higher Education for Service Members Act. The Congresswoman signed the letter to the Sec Of Def Chuck Hagel in support of Tuition Assistance for Active Duty. In the next couple of weeks the VA Committee will be holding a hearing to examine the Veterans Affairs budget request for FY 2014 to address some of the backlog issues. She will be co-sponsoring the Ruth Moore Act, which will help military victims of sexual trauma receive the care and treatment they need at the VA. She will be co-sponsoring the Service Members' Mental Health Review Act.

Amy Kennedy (Gov Hassan)

The Governor submitted a letter of support for the KC-46A. She was overwhelmed by the show of support at the Vietnam Veterans Welcome Home Ceremony. She is meeting with agencies that may be impacted with sequestration. She has written a letter of support for the military licensing bill that was introduced in the state legislature.

b. Catholic War Veterans- petition for Voting SVAC membership (submitted on 7 MAR)- reviewed the membership process: need to submit a petition for membership, need to show a period of time attending the meetings to show readiness in participating, need to select a primary, 2nd and 3rd alternate to represent the organization at the meetings. The CWV has been sending representatives to the last few meetings. They want to become a voting member because they want to be able to tell their membership that they are participating on committees such as this.

c. Bi-Annual Report- the twice yearly report is due by 1 MAY. Ed Josephson and Steph Riley will work together to draw it up. Contact them for input. It goes out to all of the VSOs, various committee heads, the state library, etc.

4. Misc. / Announcements / Calendar Items:

a. Veterans' Council of Rochester will be putting on a day event in Rochester on 18 MAY, it is still in the planning stages

b. 18 MAY is also the date of a Veterans Count dinner event on the Seacoast, information will be sent out electronically by Pete Burdett

c. Mike Farinola- Vet Center fishing trip on May 29. Betty Burbank has the sign up list

d. Jo Moncher- sending a team of 12 individuals to Bethesda to work on a Veterans Court initiative. SAMSHA had extra slots and invited NH participation.

e. Rep Theberge- invited the CODEL to meet with the state legislature on 25 APR at 0900 to talk to them about state issues. Can attend if interested.

f. Cate Sementa- Harbor Homes 6th Annual Fundraising Auction on 13 APR from 1800-2200at the Alpine Grove Banquet Facility in Hollis, NH

g. Jo Moncher- working with the state AG about a scam. WRJ had a concern about an organization called Project Vet Care, Inc. Have turned their name over to the AG office to be investigated.

Approved

h. 3rd Annual Combined Officer and Enlisted National Guard Association of NH state conference from 0900-1500 at Executive Court in Manchester on 13 APR.

5. Motion to adjourn 1st M Farinola, 2nd A Grant and the meeting ended at 1905.

Next meeting date: 7 MAY 2013 (Regularly the 1st Tue at 1700) Location: NG Aviation Facility - Concord, NH

Respectfully submitted,

Steph Riley
Secretary